



# Media Violence Inventory

*A Parent's Diary*



## A Message from the Attorney General:

Dear Parents:

The entertainment industry produces a steady stream of products that portray violence as exciting, painless and effective as a means of solving problems and disputes.

By the time the average child finishes elementary school, he or she will witness 8,000 murders and 100,000 acts of violence on TV alone. That doesn't include violent images encountered while playing video games, going to the movies, or listening to music with violent lyrics.

We know that these violent images can be very harmful. Over 1,000 studies have confirmed a link between media violence and aggressive behavior in children.

Fortunately, not all children are moved to actual aggression by what they watch. But many others become desensitized to the terrible human toll that results from shootings, beatings and other mayhem.

As a parent myself, I have long been concerned about the impact this violent entertainment has on the minds of our children.

Some say the answer is more government regulation of the entertainment industry. Others want the industry to exercise greater restraint in the products they target to children. I believe that neither approach will succeed unless parents themselves take a more active role in shielding children from the effects of violent entertainment. While we can't guard kids against every possible danger, we *can* do more to control their exposure to media violence.

To assist you in this effort, the Washington Attorney General's Office, in conjunction with the state's YWCAs and Mothers Against Violence in America, has produced this *Media Violence Inventory*. Its purpose is to help parents better understand what their children are watching and how it may affect them.


By completing the inventory, you will gain a record of your children's viewing habits that will help you make better judgments about the suitability of the programs they are watching.

With this knowledge in hand, you may also want to think about these additional measures:

- Avoid the use of the television as a babysitter;
- Limit television viewing to one or two *quality* hours a day;
- Turn off the television during meals and take similar steps to ensure that the TV is not the focal point of the home;
- Talk to children about the violence they do see, so they learn *your* beliefs about violence rather than the values on the screen.

Hopefully, these suggestions will help make your children's television viewing entertaining, educational and healthy. By taking an active role, we can all help combat youth violence by tuning it out and turning it off.

Sincerely,



Christine O. Gregoire  
Attorney General of Washington

# Sunday

Daytime

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				
12:30				
1:00				
1:30				
2:00				
2:30				
3:00				
3:30				
4:00				
4:30				
5:00				
5:30				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

1 = least violent

5 = most violent

# Sunday

## Evening

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
6:00				
6:30				
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

1 = least violent

5 = most violent

# Monday

Daytime

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				
12:30				
1:00				
1:30				
2:00				
2:30				
3:00				
3:30				
4:00				
4:30				
5:00				
5:30				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

1 = least violent

5 = most violent

# Monday

Evening

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
6:00				
6:30				
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

**1 = least violent**

**5 = most violent**

# Tuesday

Daytime

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				
12:30				
1:00				
1:30				
2:00				
2:30				
3:00				
3:30				
4:00				
4:30				
5:00				
5:30				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

1 = least violent

5 = most violent

# Tuesday

Evening

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
6:00				
6:30				
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

1 = least violent

5 = most violent



# Wednesday

Daytime

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				
12:30				
1:00				
1:30				
2:00				
2:30				
3:00				
3:30				
4:00				
4:30				
5:00				
5:30				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

1 = least violent

5 = most violent

# Wednesday

## Evening

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
6:00				
6:30				
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

1 = least violent

5 = most violent

# Thursday

Daytime

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				
12:30				
1:00				
1:30				
2:00				
2:30				
3:00				
3:30				
4:00				
4:30				
5:00				
5:30				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

1 = least violent

5 = most violent

# Thursday

## Evening

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
6:00				
6:30				
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

**1 = least violent**

**5 = most violent**

# Friday

Daytime

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				
12:30				
1:00				
1:30				
2:00				
2:30				
3:00				
3:30				
4:00				
4:30				
5:00				
5:30				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

1 = least violent

5 = most violent

# Friday

## Evening

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
6:00				
6:30				
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

**1 = least violent**

**5 = most violent**

# Saturday

Daytime

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				
12:30				
1:00				
1:30				
2:00				
2:30				
3:00				
3:30				
4:00				
4:30				
5:00				
5:30				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

1 = least violent

5 = most violent

# Saturday

## Evening

Time	T.V. Show	Channel	Comments	Rating
6:00				
6:30				
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00				

**Directions:** Fill in what your child watches each day, its violence rating and any comments you may have. Also include movies, computer games and recorded music.

**1 = least violent**

**5 = most violent**





## ***How Bad is the Violence?***

What are your children learning from the violence they see on T.V. and other entertainment media?

Ask yourself the following questions about the shows you rated most violent in this diary:

- Which programs most often show people getting hurt from violence?
- What happens to the people who commit violent acts? Are they more often rewarded, punished or neither?
- When people in the show have a problem or conflict, how do they solve it? Do they most often use violence? If yes, does it work?
- Which shows most often portray violent people as glamorous, powerful or heroic?

If you want to do something about violence on T.V., contact your local television station and let them know what's on your mind.



## ***The Facts About Media Violence***

- Children watch an average of 28 hours of television a week.\*
- By high school graduation, teens have spent more time watching T.V. than going to school.†
- By age 70, Americans have spent 7 years in front of the T.V.\*\*
- By about age 11, children have seen 8,000 murders and 100,000 other acts of violence on T.V.††
- 5-6 violent acts occur per hour on prime time, with 20-25 acts an hour on children's programming.\*
- 73% of violence on T.V. is rewarded or unpunished, and 58% of violent acts show no pain to victims.\*\*\*

\*Donnerstein, E., Slaby, R., and Eron, L. (1995). *The mass media and youth aggression*, In L. Eron, J. Gentry, and P. Schlegel (Eds). *Reason to Hope: A Psychological Perspective on Violence and Youth*, Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

† Sege, R., and Dietz, W., *Television Viewing and Violence in Children: The Pediatrician as Agent for Change* (1994), *Pediatrics* Vol. 94, No. 4.

\*\*Comstock, G., Strasburger, V.C., *Deceptive Appearances: Television Violence and Aggressive Behavior*, *Journal of Adolescent Health Care* 1990; 11:31.

†† Huston, A.C., Donnerstein, E., Fairchild, H., Feshbach, N.D., Katz, P.A., Murray, J.P., Rubinstein, E.A., Wilcox, B.L., and Zuckerman, D. (1992). *Big World, Small Screen: The Role of Television in American Society*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

\*\*\* *National Television Violence Study*, National Cable Television Association, Executive Summary, 1996.



## ***Where You Can Tune In for More Help!***

*12 Tips to Tame the Tube.* Helpful tips for making rules about media use in the home. Single copies available free from the National Institute on Media and the Family by calling toll-free, 1-888-672-5437. Ask for Item #99600T.

*Tools to Use to Help You Choose: A Family Guide to the TV Ratings System.* Free video, brochure and peel-off remote control sticker providing information on TV ratings systems. Available by faxing request to 202-775-3675 or by writing to the National Cable Television Association, Public Affairs Department, 1724 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20036.

<http://www.kids-in-mind.com/>

Website providing parents with objective, non-critical assessments of movies based on potentially objectionable material. Movies listed alphabetically and rated by level of sexual content, violence and profanity.

<http://www.mediaandthefamily.org/kids.html>

National Institute on Media and the Family ratings of television programs, movies and video games based on content and suitability for children of various ages.

*Mind Games.* Tips for parents and other caregivers about healthy video and computer game use. Single copies available free from the National Institute on Media and the Family by calling toll-free, 1-888-672-5437. Ask for Item #99615T.

*Keeping Kids Safe Online: Tips and Tools.* Published by The Children's Partnership in conjunction with the National PTA and the National Urban League. Available free online at <http://www.childrenspartnership.org/bbar/safety.html> or by calling 310-260-1220.